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A. D.

From the death of David to the interdiction of Mass over England and Wales in consequence of the disagreement of King John and Stephen, Abp. of Canterbury, 5 years. 1210  
 [That interdiction continued 7 years over England and 5 years over Wales.]

The next year, succeeding the first year of the interdiction of Mass, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Hywel ab Gruffydd went to Rome with John King of England, that the king might do homage to John King of England. 1211

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### CAMBRIANA.—No. I.

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*Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*—VIRGIL.

Once more, perchance, these trifles may delight.—ANON.

THERE is nothing, about which people, of all sorts, sizes, and colours, are more agreed, than they are about the truth of that often-quoted and never-to-be-sufficiently-applauded maxim of “*de gustibus non disputandum est*,” or, in plain English, “*tastes differ*.” And, however paradoxical it may seem, there can be no doubt, that it is this very difference of taste, which keeps us all in such wonderful harmony and good humour. Nor is there any point, on which men shew this difference more than in their taste for reading; their appetites for eating are not more diversified. One man prefers your good solid tome, well stuffed with matter scientific, antiquarian, or philological, which, to borrow an illustration from the learned fraternity of *gourmands*, may be assimilated most happily to a substantial baron of beef. Another has no stomach for any thing grosser than a volume of history, a book of travels, or even the last new poem, which appear to be much of a quality with a haunch of venison, a calve’s head, or a dish of wild fowl. A third,—take for example a metaphysician or a novel-reader,—relishes nothing but your whips, trifles, and syllabubs: and a fourth doats only on those miscellaneous compounds, which may be aptly compared with the old English dish of hotch-potch, or the *olla podrida* of Spain. Now, to come to the point, it must be the obvious duty of every literary cook, who undertakes to cater periodically for such a diversity of appetites, to have his larder at all times well and variously stored,—to suit alike the gross feeder, the professed epicure, and the mere mince

of dainties. At least, if he has any desire to see guests at his table, he must take care to be thoroughly provided in this important article of variety.

It is from a laudable conviction of this truth, that the preceding head is now adopted, which will serve occasionally to introduce such literary *miscellanea*, relating to Wales, as may not properly fall under any less general title. The MISCELLANIST may, indeed, be supposed to have already anticipated this purpose: but it should be recollected, that *that* title is confined, as first intended, to original contributions, while the CAMBRIANA will comprise, for the most part, such light articles, as have been previously published, but are only to be found mixed up with less digestible matter. It is not, however, designed, that the plan of the French *anas*, so happily imitated by Walpole, shall be regarded as a model in this instance, any farther than that variety will always form, with the fore-mentioned restriction, a distinguishing feature of the CAMBRIANA. For the rest, the reader, come with what appetite he may, must take the feast as he finds it.

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#### BEES.\*

OUR ancestors (the ancient Cymry) held these industrious people in great veneration, and believed them to be of paradisaical origin†. For this reason, their priests taught that the chaunting of mass was not acceptable to the deity unless the lighted tapers were made of their wax. Out of their dulcet stores they brewed their national liquor *metheglin*, or the medicinal beverage‡.

When the country was nearly one continued wilderness, almost every hollow oak was an apiary: and, as the woods were gradually destroyed, the bees were diminished in proportion. Their nests on the wastes were the property of the lords of the soil and rented by some vassals. On freehold lands they were claimed by the respective proprietors. The discoverer of a swarm was entitled by law to a reward of one penny, if they were domesticated bees, and one penny and a dinner, or, in lieu, the whole

\* This interesting account is extracted, principally, from the "Survey of North Wales," by the Rev. Walter Davies, p. 348.—ED.

† See Wotton's *Leges Wallicæ*, p. 254.—Bees have always been particular favourites with the poets. Among those, who have given the most fascinating descriptions of them, are Virgil in his "Georgics," B. 4. l. 21., Thompson in his "Spring," l. 504., and Gray in his "Ode to the Spring."—ED.

‡ Was not the general drink *medd*, or mead, somewhat different, perhaps, from *metheglin*?—ED.

of the wax, if they were of the wild race. Whoever cut a tree upon another person's property, in order to get at the nest of bees, was to be amerced the full value of both tree and bees. The respective prices of different swarms were ascertained by law in the following manner :—

|                                         | Pence. |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|
| The Parent Hive.....                    | 24     |
| The same, after emitting one colony ... | 20     |
| The same, after emitting a second ..... | 16     |
| The same, after emitting a third .....  | 12     |
| The first swarm .....                   | 16     |
| The second swarm .....                  | 12     |
| A colony from the first swarm .....     | 12     |
| The same from the second swarm .....    | 8      |

Early swarms were reckoned of full value by the first of August : such, as swarmed after that day, were not valued above four-pence\* until the following May.

In comparison with the price of other articles at the time the Welsh laws were framed, bees, by the above account, seem to have been very dear, and, consequently, scarce; but the price, set upon them by law, was much above the real price in commerce between buyer and seller. This was owing to the veneration they were held in by the Legislature, and was intended to deter the subject from offending against the statutes made to preserve them. As a confirmation of this opinion, every thing, that belonged to bees, had its value exaggerated in law: even a bee-hive was appraised at two shillings, when a new plough, without irons, was valued only at two-pence, a cow, with the first calf, 48d., a yearling calf, 14d., and a sucking lamb, one penny.

The sacred esteem, in which bees were held, at length declining, apiaries were gradually reduced to their present fewness of number. However, several persons still execrate the profane act of disposing of their bees for money, but will, nevertheless, let them out for the half share of the money and wax, when they are killed annually in autumn, and the whole live stock to be parted equally between them at the end of the fourth year.

It may not be uninteresting to add to this account, that *medd*, a drink composed of water and honey, was formerly the principal

\* Several kinds of pence occur in the Welsh laws: among these are *ceiniog gota*, a current coin, apparently equivalent to our present penny, and *ceiniog gyvraith*, or legal penny, an imaginary money of the value of three half-pence current. Thus six-pence in law were equal to nine-pence in commerce.—See *Wotton's Glossary*.

beverage amongst the natives of Wales. In the time of Hywel Dda the mead-brewer was one of the officers of the royal household: and the following enumeration of his privileges occurs in the laws of that prince. "The mead-brewer shall have his land freely, and a horse from the king, and a share of the visitor's gift-money, and the third part of the wax, which shall be taken off the vat, the two parts being divided between the hall and the chamber, two shares for the hall and third for the chamber." In another copy it is stated that "he claims the covering over the vat or else four-pence, according to the choice of the owner of the feast."

## CHRISTMAS.\*

THE old customs of this season, detailed in Brand's "Popular Antiquities," are, for the most part, common in Wales. The following too is undoubtedly of British origin, and not noticed in that book. This is, that on Christmas eve a bunch of misletoe is suspended from the ceiling, and each man, bringing a woman under it, salutes her and wishes her a merry Christmas and a happy new year. A similar custom seems also to prevail in France, where the younger peasants, about new year's tide, offer the wish of good luck at the doors of the inhabitants, with this exclamation,—"*Au gui l'an neuf*"—to the misletoe the new year, meaning, probably,—Hail or come to the misletoe, it is the new year,—the beginning of which is very nearly marked by the falling of the berries of that plant. Both of these customs belong evidently to the Druidical institution †.

Another custom, which is now in many places relinquished, was that of the *Plygan*, or service in the church about three o'clock in the morning at Christmas day, when, according to Mr. Pen-nant, "most of the parishioners assembled in church, and, after prayers and a sermon, continued there singing psalms and hymns with great devotion till broad day: and, if, through age or infirmity, any were disabled from attending, they never failed having prayers at home and carols on our Saviour's nativity." The Christmas carol is still considered essential to the day; and a new one is, for the most part, composed every year, which is

\* This account is extracted from the "Cambrian Popular Antiquities" by the late Rev. Peter Roberts, p. 131.—ED.

† See CAMBRO-BRITON, Vol. i. p. 447. for a note; in reference to the Druidical veneration for the misletoe.—ED.

sung in the church after the morning or evening service. And, as a carol is looked upon as an effort of genius, one, which is approved of, seldom fails to raise the reputation of the poet. The subject is, of course, taken from Scripture, and the carol is properly a hymn. Some of these effusions exhibit much poetic merit, particularly those of Huw Morus, who excelled in this species of composition as he did also in one of a very different character.

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## THE MISCELLANIST.—No. IX.

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### ANCIENT GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES.

#### *To the EDITOR of the CAMBRO-BRITON.*

MR. EDITOR,—THE geography of Orosius, and the navigation of Ohthere in the northern seas, as preserved by Alfred, contain some names of countries and nations, which appear to be useful for the illustration of the history of the British isles; and you may, therefore, judge them worthy of being inserted in the CAMBRO-BRITON.

#### NAMES OF COUNTRIES AND PEOPLE IN THE NINTH CENTURY.

Thila, *Iceland*;—Igbernia, or Scotland, *Ireland*;—Iraland, *Scotland*;—the country of the Scoti, or Scotland; the south extremity of *Spain*\*;—Dena, *Denmark*;—Weonodland, Winedeland, or Sysyle, the *Wendi*, then inhabiting all the region between the Elbe and the Baltic, east of the Seaxna and Angle, but who are now confined to Lusatia;—Northmanna, *Norway*;—Sweoland, *Sweden*;—Terfenna-land, or the Waste land, *Swedish Lapland*;—Cwen Sea, the *White Sea*;—Screide Finni, and Cwenas, the inhabitants of the present *Russian Lapland*, on the west shore of the White Sea:—Cwenland, or Cwenaland, *Finland*, or all that tract lying east of the Gulf of Bothnia, from the Gulf of Finland northward to the White Sea.

#### *Observations.*

1. The name of *Lapland* was not known in the ninth century; and the people now inhabiting that country and *Finland* speak a common dialect, and which is totally different from the languages of all their neighbours.

\* The old Irish chronicles make mention of a Spanish colony as coming to Ireland, under the name of *Kin Skuit*, or Skuit nation.